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The Conference Board

Economics Program

MONTHLY UPDATE TO

International Economic Scoreboard

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board — January 1990

SUMMARY

Worldwide, the leading indexes continue to point to slow business-cycle expansion ahead for the industrial countries.

Regionally, new data have restored what was (until the past few months) a fairly regular pattern where the Pacific Region shows more cyclical energy than Europe and North America.

Nationally, the big news is in the Far East. Once again the leading index for Japan shows an optimistic picture. At the same time, the Australian outlook has weakened further, with the leading index declining at a 4 percent annual rate. Although it's too early to be at all confident about it, the Australian data are, in fact, giving off more than a whiff of recession. France, Italy and the United Kingdom also show declines in their leading indexes, but by narrower margins.

Interpretation: Although the indexes for the 11-country composite haven't changed much over the past few months, there is suddenly much less conformity of pattern from country to country. This report shows 4 countries with *negative* rates of change in their leading indexes, the first time that's happened since 1982.

Summary Of Growth Rates, Eleven Industrial Countries

	Ten-year Growth Rate	Indexes of Economic Performance Growth Rates*			Leading Business Cycle Indexes Growth Rates*			Current Reading on the Cycle	Latest Month Covered
	1976-86	6 mos. ago	3 mos. ago	Latest month	6 mos. ago	3 mos. ago	Latest month		
	annual rates, percent								
Eleven countries	3	5	4	3	4	2	2	Expansion continuing	Oct.
Ten countries excl. U.S.	3	5	5	4	5	4	3	Expansion continuing	Oct.
North America (2)	3	4	3	1	2	-2	1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct.
Europe (4)	2	5	5	5	4	2	0	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct.
Pacific Region (5)	4	5	6	4	7	6	7	Expansion continuing	Oct.
United States	3	4	3	1	2	1	1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Nov.
Canada	3	3	2	1	0	1	1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct.
West Germany	2	4	5	3	7	5	3	Expansion continuing	Nov./Oct.
France	2	8	7	5	5	1	-1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct./Nov.
United Kingdom	2	5	5	5	1	0	-1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct.
Italy	2	-1	2	6	-1	1	-2	Expansion resuming, leaders weak	Oct.
Japan	4	5	5	4	7	7	9	Expansion continuing	Oct.
Australia	3	13	11	6	3	1	-4	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Oct./Nov.
Taiwan, R.O.C.	8	7	6	6	6	9	7	Expansion continuing	Nov.
Korea, R.O.K.	7	3	9	6	4	8	1	Expansion continuing, leaders weak	Nov.
New Zealand	2	2	2	0	5	2	5	Upturn developing	Aug./Oct.

* Ratio of current month's index to average index over the preceding 12 months, expressed as a compound annual rate.

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INDEXES, WORLDWIDE AND BY REGION, 1988-89

		11 Countries		10 Countries excl. U.S.		North America (2)		Europe (4)		Pacific Region (5)	
		Indexes, 1980 = 100									
		Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
Jan.	88	122	130	124	127	121	132	115	118	137	142
Feb.	88	123	130	125	127	122	133	116	118	139	143
Mar.	88	124	131	125	128	123	133	116	119	140	145
Apr.	88	124	131	125	129	123	133	116	118	139	147
May	88	124	131	126	130	123	133	117	119	140	148
June	88	125	133	127	131	124	135	118	120	141	150
July	88	126	133	127	132	124	134	118	121	141	151
Aug.	88	126	134	128	133	124	136	119	121	142	153
Sept.	88	127	134	129	133	125	135	119	122	143	152
Oct.	88	127	134	129	133	126	136	119	122	144	152
Nov.	88	128	135	130	134	126	136	120	123	145	153
Dec.	88	129	136	131	135	126	137	121	123	146	157
Jan.	89	129	138	131	137	127	138	121	124	147	159
Feb.	89	130	138	132	137	127	137	122	124	147	160
Mar.	89	131	137	133	137	128	137	122	124	151	159
Apr.	89	130	137	132	137	128	137	123	124	148	159
May	89	130	137	132	136	128	137	123	124	148	157
June	89	131	137	134	137	128	136	124	125	150	160
July	89	131	137	134	138	128	135	124	124	150	161
Aug.	89	132	139	135	139	129	137	125	125	152	165
Sept.	89	132	139	135	140	129	137	125	125	151	165
Oct.	89	132	139	135	139	128	137	125	124	151	165

	11 Countries		10 Countries excl. U.S.		North America (2)		Europe (4)		Pacific Region (5)	
	Growth Rates, Percent									
	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
	6	5	7	5	5	4	6	2	8	10
	7	4	8	5	6	4	6	2	9	9
	7	4	8	5	6	3	7	3	9	9
	6	4	6	5	6	2	5	2	7	10
	6	4	6	6	5	1	6	3	7	10
	6	5	7	6	6	4	6	4	8	10
	6	4	6	6	5	1	6	4	7	10
	6	6	6	7	5	5	6	5	7	11
	5	5	6	6	4	3	6	5	7	8
	5	5	6	6	5	3	5	5	6	7
	5	5	6	6	4	3	6	5	7	7
	6	6	6	7	4	4	6	5	7	11
	6	7	6	8	4	5	6	6	7	13
	5	6	6	8	5	3	6	5	6	12
	6	5	7	6	4	2	5	5	10	9
	5	4	5	5	4	2	5	4	5	7
	4	2	4	3	4	1	5	3	4	3
	4	3	5	4	3	0	5	3	6	6
	4	2	5	4	3	-2	5	2	6	6
	5	3	5	5	3	1	5	2	6	10
	4	3	4	5	2	0	4	2	5	8
	3	2	4	3	1	1	5	0	4	7
	Ten Year Annual Growth Rate, Percent									
	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	4	4

INDEXES, ELEVEN COUNTRIES, 1988-89

		U.S.		Canada		West Germany		France		U.K.		Italy		Japan		Australia		Taiwan, R.O.C.		Korea, R.O.K.		New Zealand	
		Indexes, 1980 = 100																					
		Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.	Perf.	Lead.
Jan.	88	120	133	127	124	112	117	122	121	115	117	110	114	134	141	128	122	172	192	201	201	112	113
Feb.	88	121	134	128	125	112	117	123	122	115	117	110	114	136	142	129	123	177	197	203	202	111	112
Mar.	88	122	134	129	125	113	118	123	123	116	117	111	115	137	143	130	125	174	201	202	205	111	112
Apr.	88	122	134	129	125	112	118	123	122	116	116	111	115	137	146	129	126	175	202	200	202	110	112
May	88	122	134	130	125	113	119	124	124	117	117	111	116	137	147	129	127	176	205	199	203	110	112
June	88	123	136	130	125	114	119	125	126	118	118	112	116	139	149	132	128	177	206	202	207	110	112
July	88	124	134	130	124	114	120	126	126	119	119	113	116	139	150	132	128	179	209	201	209	110	111
Aug.	88	124	137	131	125	115	121	127	126	119	120	113	117	140	152	132	129	182	215	206	212	110	112
Sept.	88	124	136	131	125	115	120	128	128	120	119	112	117	141	151	134	129	183	217	206	209	111	113
Oct.	88	125	137	131	124	115	121	128	129	120	120	112	117	141	151	136	128	182	217	208	212	111	114
Nov.	88	125	137	132	124	116	121	130	130	121	121	113	117	142	152	136	129	186	219	208	216	112	115
Dec.	88	126	138	132	125	116	122	130	130	122	120	113	117	143	156	138	128	185	218	209	219	112	115
Jan.	89	126	139	133	125	117	124	131	131	122	121	112	117	144	159	140	128	187	219	211	218	112	115
Feb.	89	127	138	133	124	118	125	132	130	123	120	113	117	144	161	142	128	186	219	212	213	112	116
Mar.	89	127	138	133	125	118	126	133	131	123	120	112	117	148	159	141	129	188	226	213	219	112	116
Apr.	89	127	138	133	125	118	126	133	130	123	120	112	116	145	158	144	128	187	223	211	217	112	117
May	89	127	138	134	124	118	126	134	131	124	120	112	116	145	156	143	130	189	223	211	217	112	118
June	89	128	137	134	125	119	126	135	132	124	119	113	117	147	160	146	130	188	227	213	218	112	117
July	89	128	136	134	125	119	127	136	130	125	120	114	118	147	162	146	128	190	228	216	217	111	116
Aug.	89	128	138	134	125	120	126	136	131	125	120	114	119	148	166	147	130	192	231	220	225	111	118
Sept.	89	128	138	135	126	119	128	136	132	126	119	115	117	148	165	149	128	191	232	219	226		118
Oct.	89	128	138	134	125	120	127	136	130	126	119	117	116	148	166	147	127	192	232	220	219		119
Nov.	89	128	138			120			130								126	194	233	220	220		
		Growth Rates, Percent																					
Jan.	88	5	4	7	6	3	3	8	2	8	2	6	-3	8	11	7	4	4	9	17	16	-2	-4
Feb.	88	6	3	6	5	4	3	8	3	8	0	6	-2	9	9	8	4	8	12	17	14	-3	-5
Mar.	88	6	3	7	5	4	3	8	4	8	1	6	0	9	9	9	6	4	14	14	15	-3	-5
Apr.	88	6	2	6	4	3	4	7	3	7	-1	6	0	8	10	6	6	4	12	10	9	-3	-5
May	88	5	1	6	3	4	4	7	4	7	0	6	1	7	10	5	8	4	14	7	9	-3	-4
June	88	6	4	6	3	4	4	8	7	7	1	6	1	8	10	8	8	5	12	8	11	-3	-3
July	88	5	1	5	1	3	5	8	6	7	3	7	1	7	11	8	6	6	13	6	11	-3	-4
Aug.	88	5	5	5	1	5	5	8	6	7	4	5	3	7	11	6	7	8	17	9	13	-3	-2
Sept.	88	4	3	5	1	4	4	8	8	7	3	4	2	7	8	9	6	8	16	7	7	-2	-1
Oct.	88	5	3	4	0	3	4	7	9	7	3	3	3	6	7	9	3	6	15	7	9	-1	2
Nov.	88	4	4	4	0	4	4	8	9	7	5	4	3	7	7	8	5	10	14	6	10	1	4
Dec.	88	4	5	4	0	5	6	8	7	6	3	4	3	7	12	10	3	8	11	6	11	1	3
Jan.	89	4	5	4	1	5	7	8	8	6	4	1	3	7	14	11	3	9	10	7	9	2	4
Feb.	89	5	4	4	0	6	8	8	6	6	2	1	2	6	14	12	2	6	8	7	3	2	4
Mar.	89	4	2	3	0	5	8	8	6	6	1	0	1	11	10	11	2	7	12	7	8	2	5
Apr.	89	4	2	3	0	5	7	8	4	5	1	-1	-1	5	7	13	1	5	7	4	5	2	5
May	89	4	2	3	-1	4	7	7	5	5	0	0	-1	4	3	9	3	7	6	3	4	2	6
June	89	3	0	3	0	5	5	7	4	5	-1	1	1	5	6	13	2	4	9	4	4	2	5
July	89	3	-2	2	1	4	5	7	1	5	0	2	1	5	7	11	-1	5	8	7	2	0	2
Aug.	89	3	1	2	1	5	3	7	1	5	1	3	3	6	11	10	1	6	9	9	8	0	5
Sept.	89	2	0	3	2	3	5	5	3	5	-1	4	-1	4	9	11	-1	4	9	7	8		3
Oct.	89	1	1	1	1	4	3	5	-1	5	-1	6	-2	4	9	6	-2	5	8	7	1		5
Nov.	89	1	1			3			-1								-4	6	7	6	1		
		Ten Year Annual Growth Rate, Percent																					
1976-86		3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	3	3	8	8	7	7	2	2